GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT
LOK SABHA

STARRED QUESTION NO:289
ANSWERED ON:21.12.2004
UNICEF REPORT ON MALNUTRITION AMONG CHILDREN
Abdullakutty Shri A.P.

Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether according to UNICEF report of 2004 on the State of the Wodd Children, about 47% children under the age of 5 in India are malnourished;

(b) whether the report also ranks India at 53 in the under-five mortality index with 93 deaths per 1000 children;

(c) if so, the reaction of the Government thereto; and

(d) the steps taken by the Government while evolving future policies on child development?

Answer

MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRIARJUN SINGH)

(a),(b),(c)&(d) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS A TO D OF LOK SABRA STARRED QUESTION NO. 289 FOR 21.12.2004 REGARDING MALNUTRITION AMONG CHILDREN.,

(a) Yes, Sir. Percentage of underweight children under 3 (not under 5) years is 47.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) & (d) The Government is aware of and concerned about problems of malnutrition among children and all necessary steps are being taken by the Government to improve the situation.

Several schemes and programmes are being implemented by various Ministries/Departments which directly or indirectly influence the nutritional status and development of children. The schemes and programmes which directly influence survival, growth and development of under five children include Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS), Nutrition Component of Paradhan Mantri Gramodyog Yojana (PMGY), Reproduction and Child Health Programme, National Nutritional Anaemia Control Programme, National Prophylaxis Programme against Blindness due to Vitamin A deficiency and others which include free distribution of foodgrains to under nourished girls, pregnant and lactating women in 51 nutrition ally backward districts. Programmes which indirectly affect malnutrition among children are Targeted Public Distribution System, Antyodaya Yojana, Grain Bank Scheme etc. As a result, percentage of underweight children under three which was 52 in 1992-93 has come down to 47 in 1998-99.

In view of commitment of the Government under the National Common Minimum Programme, a major expansion of the ICDS Scheme is being undertaken in order to cover more children and mothers under the programme.

A National Nutrition Mission, headed by the Hon`ble Prime Minister has been set up to review existing strategies, give policy direction and effectively coordinate the efforts of various Ministries/Departments concerned with nutritional status of the population.